

J.C. Watts, Jr.  
Chairman  
4th District, Oklahoma

*House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business  
(Last Vote: Late Thursday Night)*

*Anticipated Floor Action:*

**H.Con. Res. 331—Commending Israel’s Redeployment from  
Southern Lebanon**

**H.R. 2559—Agricultural Risk Protection Act (Conference Report)**

**H.Res. \_\_\_—Providing for FY 2001 Agriculture Appropriations (H.R. 4461)**

**H.R. 3916—Telephone Excise Tax Repeal Act**

**Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 3660—Partial Birth  
Abortion Ban Act of 2000**

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**H.Con.Res. 331—Commending Israel’s Redeployment from  
Southern Lebanon**

**Floor Situation:** Yesterday, the House considered H.Con.Res. 331. A roll call vote was ordered, but postponed until today.

**Summary:** H.Con.Res. 331 commends Israel for its decision to withdraw its military forces from southern Lebanon and for taking the risks of pursuing peace in the Middle East. The measure calls for the United Nations to recognize Israel’s fulfillment of its obligations under Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for “strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries” and established a United Nations interim force to help restore Lebanese sovereignty. Also, the resolution calls upon the Security Council to provide the necessary resources for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to implement its mandate under Resolution 425, while also calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanese territory.

In addition, H.Con.Res. 331: (1) urges UNIFIL to gain full control over southern Lebanon, including taking actions to disarm Hezbollah and similar groups; (2) appeals to the Lebanese government to grant clemency to all members of the Southern Lebanese Army and their families; (3) calls on the international community to ensure that southern Lebanon does not become a staging ground for attacks against Israel, and cooperate in bringing about the reconstruction and reintegration of southern Lebanon; (4) recognizes Israel's right, under Chapter 7, Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, to defend itself and its people from attack, and asserts United States support for maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge in order to ensure its long term security.



## **H.R. 2559—Agricultural Risk Protection Act (Conference Report)**

**Floor Situation:** The House will consider the resolution to accompany H.R. 2559. The Rules Committee met on May 24, 2000 and granted a rule waiving all points of order against the conference report and its consideration and that it be considered as read.

**Summary:** H.R. 2559 pumps 7.1 billion dollars into the Federal Crop Insurance Program. It also changes procedures in an attempt to increase ease of use for farmers and ranchers. Title I of the program allows the government to assist farm producers in buying better crop insurance coverage. It also assists farmers who have suffered multiple losses in the 1990's. The legislation also authorizes a first time livestock risk management pilot program.

Title II authorizes the Farm Service Agency to assist the Federal Crop Insurance Program in order to improve the operations of the program. The Farm Service Agency will monitor and audit claims and make sure that claims are not falsified. This title also presents new standards for reporting and keeping records of crop acreage, yield and production.

Title III restructures the Federal Crop Insurance board of directors in order to improve the administration of the program. This section also gives the board of directors authority to create new insurance programs on a need basis. In an attempt to improve program efficiency, the section places the program under stricter time restrictions regarding filed claims and requests.

### **Highlights of the Conference Report:**

- The conference agreement continues the standard catastrophic risk protection (CAT) coverage (insuring 50% of yield at 55% of price) at a fee of \$100. The conference agreement also allows producers to select an alternative CAT coverage based on area yields and losses that is comparable to the standard individual CAT coverage.
- Producers struck with multiple years of natural disasters face lower yields in their production history. The conference agreement provides producers maximum flexibility in maintaining their insurable yield to address this problem. Producers may record in their actual production history a yield equal to 60 percent of the long-term county average yield for any year the actual yield falls below that amount.

- The conference agreement requires the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) to review the rating and loss histories of insurance policies for crops by area and make any appropriate adjustments for any excessive rates for the 2002 crop year.
- The conference agreement establishes new procedures for insuring multiple crops on the same land, with provisions for traditional double-cropping areas. Producers also have more flexibility with regard to prevented planting coverage.
- The conference agreement cracks down on fraud, waste and abuse to build a stronger crop insurance program and lower producer costs. The conference agreement directs the Secretary to develop and implement a coordinated plan for the FCIC and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to reconcile producer information on an annual basis.
- Research and Development – The conference agreement makes a substantial investment in research and development by allowing experts to research and develop new policies, rather than the RMA. This provision will increase the quality and quantity of insurance available to producers and make insurance policies available more quickly. The FCIC would have the authority to enter into contracts for research and development for under served states and commodities, including specialty crops.
- Pilot Programs – The conference agreement provides for expanded pilot authorities, including coverage for livestock. The conference agreement also provides for a pilot program on premium rate reduction.
- Management of Corporation – The conference agreement would add one additional farmer to the Board of Directors of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation so that four active farmers would serve on the board. This provision would also require that at least one member of the board be a specialty crop producer.

### **Committee Action:**

The Agriculture Committee reported the bill by voice vote on August 3, 1999. The House passed the bill by voice vote on September 29, 1999. H.R. 2559 passed the senate by unanimous consent on March 23, 2000.

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### **H.Res. \_\_\_\_—Providing for FY 2001 Agriculture Appropriations (H.R. 4461)**

**Floor Situation:** The House will consider H. Res. \_\_\_\_ on Thursday, May 25, 2000. Last night the Rules Committee issued an open rule providing one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. All points of order are waived against the bill and provides that the amendments in the Rules Committee report shall be considered as adopted. The rule also waives points of order against provisions in the bill that are unauthorized or legislative in nature, *except* as specified in the rule (e.g. the so-called Nethercutt Amendment). The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority to Members who have pre-printed their

amendments in the *Congressional Record* and allows the Chairman to reduce votes to five minutes as long as they follow a 15-minute vote. One motion to recommit, with or without instructions, is in order.

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## **H.R. 3916- Elimination of the Spanish American War Excise Tax**

**Floor Situation:** The House is scheduled to consider H.R. 3916 today. On Tuesday, May 23, 2000, the Rules Committee granted a closed rule, which provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the Chairman and ranking Member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The rule provides that the amendment recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill will be considered as adopted with adoption of the resolution.

**Summary:** H.R. 3916 would eliminate the three percent federal excise tax on telecommunications services phasing in a complete repeal of the tax over the next three years. A one percent reduction will occur each year for the next three years, allowing the tax to be fully repealed by October 1, 2002. The first reduction would take effect 30 days after this bill is enacted into law, the second on October 1, 2001, and the final repeal on October 1, 2002. CBO estimates that enactment of H.R. 3916 will cost \$19.8 billion over five years. This measure was introduced by Mr. Portman on March 17, and reported from the Committee on Ways and Means on May 17 by a voice vote.

**Views:** The Republican Leadership supports passage of H.R. 3916. The Clinton Administration has indicated that they support phasing out the telephone tax, however, they believe that this and other tax policy objectives should be enacted as part of an overall budget framework.

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## **Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 3660 (Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2000)**

**Floor Situation:** The House may consider a motion by Mr. Conyers to instruct conferees on H.R. 3660. Such a motion may be offered as a privileged matter after a measure has been in conference for 20 days; it is debatable for one hour. Motions to instruct are non-binding (i.e., they state the House's opinion on a matter but do not require any particular action from House conferees). The House passed H.R. 3660 by a vote of 287-141 on April 5, 2000; the Senate passed a similar measure (S. 1692) by a vote of 63-34 on April October 21, 1999. **Contact:** x5-5126

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